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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 000282

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TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL READOUT MAY 2, 2007

Classified By: A/DCM Ian Kelly for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (S) SUMMARY:

-- Afghanistan: Allegations of civilian deaths near Herat seized PermReps, attention as the U.S. and Spain push for NATO to develop a response to such allegations. SHAPE focused attention on increased enemy suicide attacks and the need to counter increasing IED attacks, including through better training and HQ staffing, as well as the heightened enemy interest and build-up in Kabul and environs. Ambassador Nuland urged Allies to focus greater effort on countering IEDs, to do more to train Afghan forces, and to follow U.S. leadership in staffing HQ ISAF. Portuguese Quick Reaction Force (QRF) to deploy to RC-S later in May.

-- Kosovo: Deputy Secretary General (D/SYG) Minuto-Rizzo called for continued Alliance unity and noted that last week,s UNSC visit to Kosovo was successful due to KFOR,s logistical support and vigilance. D/SYG informed NAC that SYG will hold a Balkans discussion with PermReps sometime after May 8.

-- Iraq: Spain announced contribution of 400K euros for NTM-I.

-- AOB: Pakistan and NATO Office of Resources: D/SYG told PermReps that SYG will ask Senior Resource Board (SRB) for advice on eligibility of Pakistani military officers for financial support for NATO training. The NATO Office of Resources stands up on May 1.

END SUMMARY.

Afghanistan

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12. (S) D/SYG Minuto-Rizzo, chairing, said that following Ambassadors, post-Oslo discussions earlier this week, it appeared key themes emerging from the Ministerial meeting on Afghanistan are: delivering on NATO,s comprehensive approach; enhancing support to the Afghan National Army

(ANA); and advancing strategic engagement with Pakistan. The D/SYG noted that COMISAF, NATO SCR Everts, UNAMA, the EU, and U.S. had met with President Karzai, who was forming a commission to investigate allegations of civilian casualties during &Coalition8 operations near Herat.

13. (C) Referencing the Herat allegations, Chairman of the Military Committee (CMC) Henault told the NAC that he had spoken with SACEUR and COMISAF, and initial indications were that Coalition special forces elements were involved in the fight, but that NATO provided resupply and close air support. The Spanish PermRep called for a statement of regret by NATO, SHAPE, or ISAF. Ambassador Nuland supported this call, noting that NATO needed to be prepared in the future to respond to allegations of civilian casualties within minutes, as the Taliban was increasingly using civilians as shields. The standard ISAF response should be similar to U.S. response times and messaging, which typically regrets any civilian losses, pledges (and conducts) investigation and outreach to families, notes the context of military operations, and highlights the Taliban's tactic of using civilians as human shields.

14. (S) SHAPE Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Policy BG Porter briefed the NAC on threats, current operations, a reconstruction success, and Afghan security force training. BG Porter said that although Opposing Militant Forces (OMF) are not capable of large scale activity, they have increased their op tempo this spring; there were 50% more suicide attacks in March than February 2007, and a 100% increase in attacks (20 to 40) over the comparable period in 2006. BG Porter expected more activity in mid-May, following the poppy harvest. Though OMF efforts remain focused on RC-South,

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Porter briefed that intelligence reporting had picked up signs of an OMF build-up in and around Kabul province, with Logar province as a key base. BG Porter stated that Operation Achilles would wind down in mid-May and be replaced by Operation Adalat (&Justice8), which would focus on northern Kandahar province. The Portuguese QRF company in RC-Capital would go south for this operation, he said. ISAF efforts in the Sangin valley enabling work on the Kajaki Dam to go forward were great examples for future work, BG Porter cited, adding that 100,000 euros of the ISAF Post-Operations Humanitarian Relief Fund had been disbursed in the area. He urged nations to fill NATO's embedded training team (OMLT) obligations, and pointed to a May 16 brief to the NAC by SHAPE on ANSF training. BG Porter also thanked the U.S. for recently filling 96 ISAF HQ billets.

15. (C) Both CMC and BG Porter highlighted ISAF counter-IED shortcomings, of crucial importance as the OMF increasingly turns to IEDs as a primary means of asymmetrical operations. Porter stated that in March 2007, of 120 known possible events, there were 60 detonations (50 of those were &hits8), ten were turned in, and 50 were found prior to detonation thanks to help from locals. There had been 69 IED events from April 1-21, with 14 ISAF KIA. Despite these concerns, ISAF HQ counter-IED branch billets remained unfilled, and nations continued to send soldiers to Afghanistan without crucial IED training (a national responsibility).

16. (C) During discussion, Ambassador Nuland urged Allies who could not provide military support to the south to provide reconstruction aid instead. In advance of upcoming meetings of NATO CHODs and Defense Ministers, she urged Allies to dig deep and fill counter-IED billets, provide required OMLT teams, and fill a crucial looming helicopter shortfall later this summer. She asked CMC if ISAF is doing enough work on the IED issue in RC-South and whether ISAF had come across solid evidence of Iranian EFP (Explosively Formed Penetrators) weaponry in Afghanistan. (Answer: No definitive evidence yet or confirmation of use against ISAF, but recent IED attacks have been effective against both

soft-skin and hard-skin ISAF vehicles.) In response to a Dutch intervention that strict validation requirements by CSTC-A (the Coalition Command that oversees the training and equipping of Afghan forces) were limiting Allies, ability to fill OMLT requirements and should be reexamined, Ambassador Nuland urged Allies who wanted to do more but were possibly daunted by what they perceived as overwhelming CSTC-A requirements to begin a dialogue at senior levels with the CSTC-A command.

¶17. (C) The Czech PermRep thanked ISAF, particularly U.S. forces, for rescuing the Czech Charge (who had only been in-country two weeks, when the new Czech embassy was opened) from an OMF attack on his convoy in Logar. The Spanish PermRep worried that a permanent Taliban presence was developing in RC-West, stating that NATO could not allow this to happen, and highlighting the importance of ANSF training. (Comment: The current ISAF CJSOR calls for additional ISAF forces in RC-W, precisely to counter this potential difficulty. End comment.) The Turkish PermRep told the NAC that Presidents Karzai and Musharraf had met in Ankara over the course of April 29 and 30, in a &constructive atmosphere,8 and he hoped to be able to share a more thorough readout from Ankara with colleagues soon.

#### Kosovo

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¶18. (C) The DSYG called for unity in the Alliance on Kosovo during this critical period and noted the importance of a unified NATO for its internal planning and coordination with the EU. He told the NAC that last week,s visit to Kosovo by the UN Security Council representatives was a success due in

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large part to KFOR,s logistical support and vigilance. He informed the Council that the SYG will have a separate discussion on the Balkans following his May 7-8 trip to Pakistan. Lastly, he noted that there will be another meeting of the Contact Group at the Political Directors, level in London on May 3, with NATO participation. The CMC provided an operational update from last week,s UNSC visit, remarking that the Serb-led demonstrations on the administrative boundary were peaceful and that KFOR increased its tempo of operations, including patrolling and air scanning, in support of UNMIK. The Spanish PermRep informed the NAC that Spain will contribute 300 thousand euros to the NATO Southeast Europe Trust Fund initiative.

#### Iraq

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¶19. (U) The D/SYG noted Ambassador Pardew, the D/ASG for Operations, is in Tampa representing NATO at the CENTCOM Coalition Conference for Iraq. Pardew will brief PermReps upon his return. Spain announced a contribution of 400,000 euros for the NTM-I trust fund.

#### Terrorism

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¶10. (U) The UK Deputy PermRep noted the April 30 conclusion of a UK trial against a terrorist network that was planning to detonate a fertilizer bomb in a crowded public area. He said this had been an ongoing investigation since 2003. Five people were convicted and sentenced to life in prison. He said this case should serve as a reminder to all of the reality of the threat that NATO Allies face.

#### Any Other Business

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¶11. (U) Pakistan: The DSYG said that, based on PermReps, April 30 discussion, the SYG will ask NATO,s Senior Resource Board to provide Council with advice on the eligibility for financial support of Pakistani officials taking part in NATO-sponsored training programs. He added his hope that NATO can show flexibility and come to a conclusion soon on the transit agreement with Pakistan.

¶12. (U) NATO Office of Resources: The DSYG announced the standing up of the NATO Office of Resources as of May 1. The office will have full operating capability by September. He said the new office will be responsible for supporting committees and ensuring best practices are put into place in terms of operating efficiently and effectively.

NULAND